



U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS BALTIMORE DISTRICT At Raystown Lake

NEWS RELEASE

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Results from second infrared deer survey at Raystown Lake now available

Initial results from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' second thermal infrared deer survey at Raystown Lake indicate that, even with significant increases in antlerless tags through the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Deer Management Assistance Program, good habitat areas showed only moderate decreases or even increases in deer density. Poor habitat areas, even with little to no hunting pressure, experienced the largest decreases in deer densities and the lowest deer per square mile. These facts demonstrate that the deer simply move from the poor food areas into the good food areas.

The survey revealed that the post-hunting-season deer herd at Raystown Lake is about 24 deer per square mile, compared to 52 deer per square mile during the last survey in fall 2004. The western side of the lake, where hunting access is excellent, experienced a reduction of deer density from 43 to 33 deer per square mile. The infrared and browse studies show that good habitat supports good deer numbers regardless of hunting pressure.

In fact, three of the forest compartments that are in excess of 1,000 acres each, experienced a significant increase in deer numbers after hunting season. Even with more than four times as many antlerless licenses issued through the DMAP, forest compartment 9 near James Creek, had an increase from 40 to 49 deer per square mile.

Conversely, on the eastern side of the lake, known as Terrace Mountain, which has very limited hunting access, the deer density decreased from 46.6 to 13 deer per square mile. Several compartments on the poor habitat and low browse areas of the eastern side of the lake dropped as low as five deer per square mile even without much hunting pressure.

The Corps browse study conducted over the winter estimated that the deer-damaged western side of the lake had carrying capacities of less than two deer per square mile. The low deer densities found in these areas during the winter infrared survey support the browse study in that deer will move out of areas with low food availability.

For more information on Raystown Lake, visit <http://raystown.nab.usace.army.mil/> or call (814) 658-3405.